JEWS *in* MICHIGAN

By JUDITH LEVIN CANTOR

DISCOVERING the PEOPLES of MICHIGAN

Jews in Michigan

DISCOVERING THE PEOPLES OF MICHIGAN
Arthur W. Helweg and Linwood H. Cousins, Series Editors

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Jews in Michigan

Judith Levin Cantor

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COVER PHOTO: Young Men's Hebrew Association basketball team, 1915, at the Jewish Institute. Courtesy of the Archives of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, Mich.

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This book is dedicated to my grandparents, resolute people who made the long journey to Michigan and who established productive lives here for themselves and the generations that followed.

And to the everlasting memory of the six million whose lives were cut short.

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I salute all the intrepid Jewish pioneers who made the journey to the Michigan wilderness in years past as well as all those who today call this special state "home." As they have enriched us, so has Michigan fulfilled its promise as a land of opportunity.

Judith Levin Cantor

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ARTHUR W. HELWEG, *Series Co-editor*

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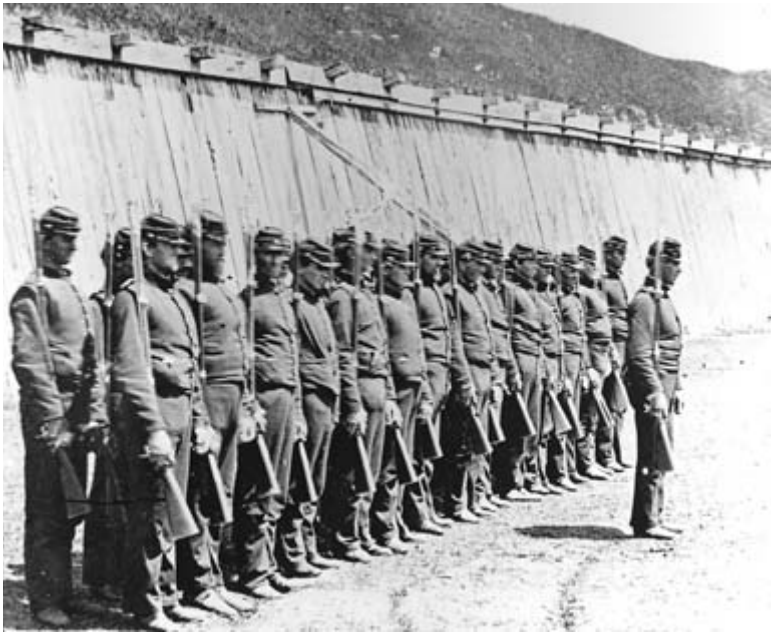
Introduction

By the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, Jews had been trickling into Michigan for the past one hundred years. The remarkably high number of Jewish men and boys who volunteered for the Union Army from this small group illustrates both their spirited patriotism and active opposition to slavery. Even before the war, Jews such as Mark Sloman were participating in the dangerous Underground Railroad, secretly leading fugitive slaves to freedom across the Detroit River to Canada. Rabbi Leibman Adler, who came to Detroit in 1854 as one of the original rabbis of the newly-formed Congregation Beth El, had been continuously campaigning and preaching for the abolition of slavery and was openly supportive of the Underground Railroad, even though such cooperation was against the law of the land.

During the Civil War, there were 151 Jewish families in Michigan—about half from Detroit, and the remainder from communities around the state. From these 151 homes, 181 Jewish men and boys served in Michigan's regiments in the Union Army, including one major, three captains, and seven with the rank of lieutenant. This unusual average of more than 1.2 men per Michigan Jewish family serving in the Union's forces may have set a national record of participation.[1]



The Second Michigan Infantry in drill at Fort Wayne, 1861. Michigan Jews who served in the Second Infantry included Joseph Freund, Julius Heine, and Samuel Klein, as well as John Kohn and Levi Rothschild. The Second was engaged in the Battle of Bull Run and was the first Michigan unit to be recruited for three years.[2] *Courtesy of the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library*.

Of the 181 soldiers, 38 lost their lives in this "War for the Maintenance of the United States of America, 1861–1865." This 20% fatality figure is about one third higher than the general Michigan average. It is interesting that after the war, many Jewish veterans from other states were attracted to Michigan and came here to settle.[3]

Who were the first Jews to come to this wilderness place a century before the Civil War? What later brought them to Michigan in even greater numbers and where did they settle? And what is the community like today? Let us trace that story from the earliest Jewish fur traders of the eighteenth century to the plucky immigrants who spread throughout every corner of the state in order to earn a living, with a glance at the community today which is involved in all aspects of contemporary life.

I. Opportunities and Challenges

Early Jewish Fur Traders

In 1761 the first Jew, Ezekiel Solomon, settled in the wilderness of British Michigan, then known as the "Upper Country"—officially part of Canada in those years before the American Revolution. German-born frontiersman Ezekiel Solomon came from Montreal by canoe to Fort Michilimackinac at the northern tip of the lower peninsula—first as a supplier to the British troops and then as a fur trader. He was joined by his partners, fellow members of the Montreal Jewish congregation—Chapman Abraham who came to Montreal from England, and Gershon Levi, Benjamin Lyon, and Levi Solomons, natives of Germany. Within a year, Chapman Abraham had moved to establish himself as a trader at the small settlement of "Fort Detroit," the oldest city west of the Appalachians and another stopover on the trade route from Montreal.[4]

At this time, the British redcoats had just conquered Michigan in the Seven Years' War against the French and Indians, and the native tribes launched an uprising against the British outposts in order to retain control over their lands. Both Solomon and Abraham were captured during surprise attacks on their forts but each managed to survive the massacres. Solomon was taken prisoner by the Ottawas at Fort Michilimackinac, but had the good fortune to be ransomed in Montreal.

Abraham was captured in "Chief Pontiac's Conspiracy of 1763" against Fort Detroit, but unexpectedly was released, and thus avoided being burned to death at the stake.[5] His miraculous story is recounted in Stephen Vincent Benet's "Jacob and the Indians."

In one of Solomon's expeditions to Mackinac, documented in a 1770 invoice, he commanded a crew of sixteen French Canadian voyageurs in two "canoes" or bateaux. They carried twenty-eight bales of dry goods including blankets and cotton and linen goods, as well as flour, one bale of tobacco, brass and copper kettles, guns, 1,600 pounds of gunpowder, shot and ball, and 320 gallons of wine, brandy and rum! All this had to be navigated across the rivers and Great Lakes, while handling tricky portages and facing the dangers not only of hazardous storms but also of Indian attacks. He made this rigorous journey repeatedly for several decades. [6]

In the meantime, from as far west as the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, Solomon was licensed to bring furs out for the European market, which was clamoring for the then-stylish beaver hat. Furs were rated along with gold as valuable possessions, and every European dreamed of owning at least a fur hat or cape.[7] Retracing the perilous voyage back across the lakes and rivers and rapids, he carried rich cargoes of furs out to Montreal. Solomon built himself a home within the fort at Michilimackinac to use when he was in Michigan and was an active participant in the life of that community, even contributing to the fundraiser to finance a missionary there. On his death in 1805, Solomon was buried in the cemetery of the Montreal Jewish congregation where he had retained his active membership.[8]

Chapman Abraham chose Fort Detroit as his base of operations, and was bringing a flotilla of five bateaux laden with merchandise across the stormy Great Lakes from Montreal when he was captured by Chief Pontiac in the uprising. In 1768, when Detroit's population under the British flag was about 700, Abraham purchased a house and a lot inside that fort a few years after his fabled escape. During the next fifteen years, before the end of the American Revolution when the population of Fort Detroit was more than tripling to approximately 2,200, he operated a successful business there known as Chapman Abraham and Company. Upon his death in 1783, however, he was buried in the

Reconstruction of the Ezekiel Solomon house (under the British flag), Fort Michilimackinac. Courtesy of the Mackinac State Historic Parks.

Jewish cemetery of the Montreal congregation. It would be sixty-five more years until a Jewish cemetery, an institution vital to a Jewish community, would be established in Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1848.

Mackinac and Fort Detroit were among the most strategic early trading posts on the Great Lakes, valued by the French, the Indians, the British and the Americans. In fact, despite their formal agreement in the 1783 Treaty of Paris settling the American Revolution, the British refused to relinquish Michigan to the Americans for thirteen more years. Finally in 1796, England lowered the Union Jack over Forts Detroit and Mackinac and Michigan became part of the United States. During the crucial development years of the eighteenth century, the adventuresome Jewish fur traders, Ezekiel Solomon, Chapman Abraham and their three partners, had helped to push back the wilderness of the Great Lakes country and to open up these vast new lands of the continent for settlement.[9] A Michigan historical plaque and an archaeological excavation of Ezekiel Solomon's house at the Michigan State Park at Fort Michilimackinac recount more of this fascinating story.

Michigan Attracts a Jewish Community to Detroit by the 1850s

About a hundred other hardy Jewish traders and pioneers settled in Michigan by the mid-nineteenth century. Among the most intriguing was the folk hero Edward Kanter, who learned the Huron, Chippewa, and Potawatomi dialects—and thus made close friends with the native tribes. If a native leader would come to visit in Detroit, they were known to sit together on the sidewalk outside his business to smoke a peace pipe. The city of Detroit named a street after Kanter, an imaginative community leader who founded the German American Bank in Detroit and was elected to the Michigan legislature.[10] An anti-slavery activist, he was one of the founders of the Republican Party in 1856 in Jackson.

Ernestine L. Rose was another extraordinary abolitionist activist. Daughter of a rabbi from a small town in Poland, she was a social reformer who visited Detroit in 1846 while on a national lecture tour. Rose belonged to a select group of American crusaders who, by the mid 1800s, were speaking out not only against slavery and child labor and for free public schools, but already were advocating for the civil and property rights of women. Rose addressed the Michigan House of Representatives, then located in Detroit, on the subject of women's suffrage, sixty-five years before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting women the right to vote. So effective was the presentation of this self-educated Jewish immigrant woman that the legislature passed a resolution praising her eloquence and stating that "the agitation on the subject of women's suffrage in Michigan began with Ernestine Rose." She is currently recognized in the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

By the 1850s, there were sufficient numbers, especially in Detroit, to form a Jewish community. With its commercially valuable location on the river connecting two of the great lakes leading westward into the continent, Detroit had grown to a city of approximately 20,000 with a population of fifty-one Jews. More than half of these Jews were German-born, but already one was from Poland, and two adults even had been born in America.[11]

At that time, Jewish people were leaving Germany and coming to America—hoping to make a better life in a new land with guaranteed

rights—because of harsh discriminatory laws against them in Bavaria and Prussia, In Bavaria Jews were not allowed to become citizens and only the oldest son in a Jewish family was allowed to marry, thus limiting the number of families. Where they could live, their business opportunities, and their education were all restricted. They were forbidden from most professions and had to pay additional special heavy taxes.[12]

Encouraged by the spirit of the American Revolution as well as the French Revolution, many Jews joined the 1848 Revolution in Germany to bring about the liberal changes that were so needed there. A number of these progressive-minded individuals not only were from established families but some already had received higher educations. When that German revolution failed, those who had supported it found it necessary to emigrate from their homeland for their own safety.[13] Consequently, many of the young, independent, and highly educated German Jews struck out to reestablish their lives in the world's first modern democratic nation—the United States of America.

Why Michigan?

Detroit, or another Michigan town, was frequently not the first stop for the Jewish immigrants from Germany; yet, Michigan had several advantages that eventually attracted these progressive freedom-loving people.

First, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which was written when Michigan was still a territory, remarkably had included the new United States of America's first written guarantee of basic civil liberties, particularly the freedom of religion. The ordinance stated: "No person . . . shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments." Furthermore, the ordinance banned slavery from the territory almost eight decades before the Thirteenth Amendment. This early piece of American federal legislation laid the foundation for the protection of fundamental liberty that later was adopted in the Bill of Rights. The precedent-breaking Northwest Ordinance also stated that "schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." Fifty years later when Michigan progressed from territory to statehood in 1837, the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance, including a Bill of Rights, were

considered so important that they were specifically included in the original Constitution of Michigan. This reinforced a great tradition of freedom in the state.

In addition, the University of Michigan, one of the nation's first public universities, was the country's largest public university by the time of the Civil War, with an enrollment of 1,200 students. Because it offered studies in law, medicine, and the liberal arts, and admitted women by 1870, the University of Michigan was certainly an attraction to immigrant families who dreamed of a higher education for their children.[14] Furthermore, the Michigan Constitution provided for public instruction and, by 1860, the Legislature approved of tax-supported free public schools through high school, a landmark achievement at that time.[15] Michigan indeed held promise for the Jewish immigrant in search of the American dream. American Jews regarded the non-sectarian, religiously neutral, universal public school as the essential key where their children could become fully integrated citizens and get the education to take advantage of this land of opportunity. Public school encouraged students to become "real Americans."

Furthermore, the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 was the critical development that opened up travel to Michigan. Michigan sent agents to New York to spread the word about the shortcut in transportation and to lure new residents here.[16] Using the canal as well as the newly-improved inland waterways, plank roads, and railroads as far as Chicago, the resolute Jewish immigrant now could more easily get to this frontier area from the crowded Eastern seaboard cities. For the sum of ten dollars, he could travel on the horse-drawn barges of the Erie Canal and then transfer to one of the numerous lake steamers between Buffalo and Detroit. The journey was not without risks, however. In Mark Sloman's diary, he reports that his wallet with a total of twenty-dollars was stolen near Albany, New York—so that he had to walk the rest of the way to Michigan! Once in Michigan, the German Jew joined other Germans, who made up the largest single foreign-born group in the state.[17]

The first priority for the new arrival was to earn a living, which demanded the utmost of hard work and initiative. Even before the Civil War, many Jewish immigrants became the ultimate entrepreneurs,

putting packs on their backs and striking out as peddlers–a pattern that would be repeated with successive waves of newcomers. They brought sundries and supplies to fellow German farmers and their wives throughout the state, people with whom they shared a common language and background.[18] Expansion of their businesses naturally followed, first with the purchase of a horse and wagon, and then with the opening of general and dry goods stores. From these modest beginnings, usually with the participation of the whole family, some of Michigan's prosperous commercial enterprises evolved. In 1850 Detroit's census of the fifty-one Jews reveals a peddler and ten merchants, as well as two cigar makers, a blacksmith, grocer, one physician, and even the eccentric but prominent portrait painter, Frederick Cohen.[19]

Michigan's First Congregation: Beth El

With a small community thus settled in Detroit, twelve Orthodox or Traditionalist men meeting at the home of Isaac and Sarah Cozens in 1850 formed the first Jewish congregation in Michigan, calling itself Beth El (House of God). Since a minimum of ten is required by Jewish tradition to have a congregation for public prayer, this new organization met that need in the young community. The new group hired a rabbi and, as was typical, this spiritual leader served the young community in a variety of ways—as a religious teacher, as the cantor (singer), as the official who performed all the traditional ritual functions (including acting as the ritual slaughterer for kosher meat), and on request as a judge to settle disputes within the community.

Following a pattern that is characteristic even today of small Jewish communities that are just getting organized, this congregation soon rented a room in which to meet. They then raised money to set up a school for the religious instruction of their children and to purchase land for a cemetery, a section adjoining Detroit's historic Elmwood Cemetery. Beth El next formed a society that cared for the sick and gave financial assistance to the poor, in addition to attending to the traditions regarding the burial of the deceased. Before long, a "Ladies Society for the Support of Hebrew Widows and Orphans" assembled to sew and

MICHIGAN
HISTORIC SITE
FIRST JEWISH
RELIGIOUS SERVICES
Near this site, in 1850, a small group of German-Jewish immigrants gathered at the home of Isaac and Sarah Cozens and formed the Bet El Society. Here Marcus Cohen, a layman, conducted the first Jewish religious service in Detroit. The following year, at the urging of Sarah Cozens, the Society was incorporated under the name of "Beth El," meaning "House of God," and thus became the first Jewish congregation in Michigan, which is still in existence.
The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan,
Congregation T'chiyah and Temple Beth El

Historical marker for the First Jewish Religious Services held in Detroit. The services were conducted by twelve men in 1850, who later organized into the Beth El Society. This marker is at Congress and St. Antoine Streets in Detroit. Courtesy of the Rabbi Leo M. Franklin Archives, Temple Beth El, Bloomfield, Michigan.

to care for widows and children in need. A whole self-help social order was established within this small pioneer congregation—a response to the Biblical moral tradition and a carryover from the traditional organization of European Jewish communities.[20]

The Jewish tradition of organizing for assistance to those in need and for service to the community became highly developed as the numbers of immigrants increased and the needs rose dramatically. The Beth El model of the self-help society to care for each other was duplicated in the subsequent congregation, the Shaarey Zedek Society, as well as

in other Jewish communities throughout the state, and most notably in the 1899 establishment of the United Jewish Charities of Detroit.

Although the Beth El congregation originally was formed by the Orthodox, by the 1860s a German-born Reform movement in Judaism appealed to many members of the congregation who already had become quite Americanized. Businessmen Simon Heavenrich and Magnus and Martin Butzel encouraged the national leader of the Reform movement, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise of Cincinnati, to visit Beth El while on a tour. Soon there was considerable interest in introducing a more Americanized service and making innovations in the religious practices—innovations such as a choir, eliminating separate seating of men and women, and prayers in English.

Traditionalists organize Shaarey Zedek Society, 1861

As often happens when two religious groups have irresolvable differences of opinion, a split occurred. When the Traditionalists saw that they could not stem the tide toward Reform in Beth El, seventeen of them withdrew in 1861 and organized the Shaarey Zedek (Gates of Righteousness) Society. As in the original Beth El, the pattern of development included hiring a spiritual leader, teaching the children, organizing for care of the needy, and opening a cemetery. In 1862, Congregation Shaarey Zedek established Detroit's first all-Jewish cemetery—Beth Olem—miles from the center of town, "way out in the country," on one-and-a-half acres of land in an area now known as Hamtramck. Eventually, this neighborhood became highly industrialized, however, and the walled grassy oasis of sacred graves that is the Beth Olem cemetery is unique in that it now lies surrounded by the parking lot of the General Motors Cadillac Motor Car plant.[21]

Shaarey Zedek had purchased its first house of worship from the former St. Mathews Colored Episcopal Church on Congress and St. Antoine Streets in the early 1860s. But with an enlarged membership, in 1877 Shaarey Zedek laid the cornerstone for the first building in Michigan to be built specifically as a synagogue. Up to this time, all places of Jewish worship locally had been in buildings that were remodeled for synagogue use. In the impressive patriotic Fourth of July

Cornerstone laying for the 1914 building of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, located on Brush and Willis in Detroit. Left to right, Conservative Rabbi A. M. Hershman, Orthodox Rabbi Judah Levin (speaking), and Reform Rabbi Leo Franklin, along with leaders David W. Simons, Harry B. Keidan, Isaac Shetzer, Isaac Saulson, Louis Smith and others. Note the abundance of American flags and bunting. In later years, this synagogue building was razed to make way for the Detroit Medical Center. Courtesy of the Archives of Congregation Shaarey Zedek.

ceremonies before a large crowd of Detroit's citizens and addressed by the mayor, it is significant that the dignitaries deposited in the new synagogue's cornerstone the constitutions of the United States and of Michigan—the legal cornerstones of democracy, of religious freedom, and of separation of church and state. In addition, in 1913, Congregation Shaarey Zedek was one of the charter organizers of the Conservative movement in American Jewry, a moderate middle group that incorporates selected changes in the tradition while maintaining its traditional basis.[22]

By 1861, therefore, Detroit saw the foundations laid for one of the leading Reform temples in America—Temple Beth El (1850), and for one of the leading Traditional (now Conservative) American synagogues, Congregation Shaarey Zedek. Both have roots dating to 1850 and both are still among the largest and most active congregations in

the country. Throughout their long histories, both congregations have included local, state, and national leaders in their membership.[23]

Throughout the cities and towns in Michigan, a similar pattern can be detected, as Jewish people with differing degrees of practice, belief, and custom have established either Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform congregations. Orthodox Judaism adheres most closely to the ancient tradition, with the service almost entirely in Hebrew; Conservative includes moderate changes to the tradition to accommodate modern practices, using both English and Hebrew in the service; and Reform incorporates greater change, using English, but more recently reincorporating some Hebrew and traditional practices.

In addition in 1969 in Birmingham, Rabbi Sherwin Wine founded the Society for Humanistic Judaism, which provides a secular service for the celebration of Jewish culture and identity. It now includes 25,000 members worldwide. Further reflecting the diversity within Jewish life, in 2000 the Reconstructionist Congregation of Detroit was established, focusing on Judaism as a "religious civilization."

Each of these groups now includes the traditional Bar Mitzvah ceremony for its thirteen-year-old boys, which demands that the children of this age meet various educational requirements including, in most cases, learning to chant from the Bible in Hebrew. In more recent times, with the exception of Orthodox congregations, girls also are participating in a Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Ideally, the studies leading to the Bar/ Bat Mitzvah establish in childhood a habit and respect for education and for the Jewish faith which endure as lifelong values. Often it is an individual's family background and custom that determine to which group he gives his loyalty or affiliation.

Turn of the Century Local Leaders Emerge

Throughout the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s, migration to Detroit and other Michigan towns continued. In reaction to increasing abuse and to discriminatory laws in Poland and Czarist Russia, during this time more Jews came from eastern Europe—representing a marked shift from the Prussian and Bavarian immigration. By 1877, when the cornerstone was laid by Detroit's Shaarey Zedek for its new synagogue, its membership

included many from Poland, Russia, and Hungary, as well as those from Germany.[24]

As with the Jews from Germany, once economic security was ensured and especially when a new generation was born and educated in America, even the eastern European immigrants could achieve status as community leaders. For the Jewish communities, success was identified by economics, communal responsibility, and higher education. Characteristically, as soon as a family could afford it, one or more of the children was sent to college. The Detroit College of Medicine, established in the city in 1869 and the forerunner of the Wayne State University College of Medicine, accounted for a number of early Jewish physicians in the state.[25] Some nineteenth-century Jewish families sent their sons, and in some cases even their daughters, to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, resulting in an emerging professional class. The future bride of architect Albert Kahn, Ernestine Krolik, whose Polish-born father was a successful peddler in Romeo, graduated from the University of Michigan in 1892. Bavarian immigrant Magnus Butzel's son, Henry Butzel, who eventually became Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, was in Krolik's class, as was Russian immigrant Moses Gomberg, who was the first Jewish teacher at the University of Michigan and who went on to achieve fame as the chairman of the Department of Chemistry. Clearly, although it has been assumed that most of the nineteenth-century Jewish success stories were of German origin, a closer examination reveals that indeed many were eastern European immigrants.

By way of example, Russian born David W. Simons, who in the 1870s had started investing in real estate, by 1899 was elected the first president of the United Jewish Charities and in 1915 served on Detroit's first nine-man City Council. His eldest son, University of Michigan Law School graduate Charles Simons, successfully ran for the state senate in 1902 and later became chief judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. Born in eastern Europe, William Saulson was elected mayor of St. Ignace and after his move to Detroit served as president of the Water Board in 1903. Polish immigrant Samuel Ginsburg and his son Bernard, both of whom became Detroit leaders and generous philanthropists, founded an iron business and eventually became partners in

the fledgling automobile manufacturing industry. In the Thumb community of Caro, Latvian immigrants Wolf and Bluma Himelhoch opened their home as the music and cultural center of the area, while up in Traverse City, Julius Steinberg from Souvalk, Poland inaugurated an elegant opera house on top of his popular department store.

The many success stories of the German Jews included those of the Bavarian-born brothers Magnus and Martin Butzel who along with Emil Heineman operated one of Michigan's largest wholesale men's clothing firms by the end of the 1870s. Emil's son David Heineman graduated from the University of Michigan law school in 1889 and, in 1907, designed the original City of Detroit flag, the centerpiece of the logo for the Detroit 300 Tricentennial celebration in 2001. Magnus Butzel was also an overseer of the Detroit Public Library and was active on the Education and Culture Commission. Louis Blitz, born in Frankfort and an 1872 law graduate of the University of Michigan, founded Michigan's first glass factory in Delray.[26] Bavarian-born Dr. Frederick L. Hirschman, an 1873 graduate of one of the first classes of the Detroit College of Medicine, went to the Upper Peninsula to combat the smallpox epidemic and remained there to practice. In the 1880s, the young immigrant son of a rabbi from Germany, Albert Kahn, was getting a start on his future world- renowned architectural career by working as an apprentice and office boy. Furthermore, due to the entrepreneurship of the Rosenfeld and Teichner families, Detroit became a flourishing center of the cigar making business. Their tobacco imports accounted for roughly 15 percent of custom duties collected by the Detroit customs officials.[27]

Dealing With Massive Immigration

The year 1881 was a watershed year in Jewish history. Conditions in eastern Europe—in Poland, Czarist Russia, Hungary, and Romania—had became so oppressive to Jews that migration to the United States and eventually to Michigan increased dramatically.[28] Laws restricted Russian Jews to live in only one area in western Russia known as the Pale of Settlement. The prohibitions against owning farms outside the Pale and severe quotas on the numbers allowed in schools, universities, and the professions imposed extreme economic hardship on them.

Indeed, in each of these eastern European countries repressive laws limited most Jews to lives of adverse poverty. Furthermore, Jews were at risk for their very safety and survival in the face of unchecked mob attacks, known as *pogroms,* which temporarily diverted the masses of people from the ineffectiveness of the Czarist regimes.

During this period of increased immigration, the Jewish population in Detroit rose tenfold from 1,000 in 1880 to 10,000 in 1910; by 1920 it had reached close to 35,000.[29] Most of the new arrivals were ambitious but penniless, escaping from a broken social order but eagerly anticipating the equality, opportunity and promise of America.

Some arrived with their young families; some came alone, sending for their wives and children soon after they were established. Many continued to send their savings back to relatives, financing parents and siblings in their extended families to join them in Michigan in a chain migration. The immigrant's paramount responsibility was to earn a living as quickly as possible. Many chose peddling, since it presented an immediate opportunity.

In a journal of her memoirs, Lillian Keidan Levin tells the typical tale of her parents' immigration in the late 1880s:

> Since there was not enough money for the whole family to take the trip to America, it was decided that my father should go by himself and then save up enough to send for Mother and the children. . . . He immediately made tracks for Detroit. . . . And now the problem was—how to make a living. He went to the wholesale jobber, where he could obtain some goods on credit and try selling them. Consequently, he took a pack and looked up some trade. Both the jobbers and the customers soon found out that he was in dead earnest to make a living—and was meticulously honest—so that he won their confidence and admiration. . . . The very first few dollars he made went across the ocean to Mother, after his personal expenses were paid. After three years of this, Father accumulated enough to buy tickets for the family to join him in America . . . in Detroit. Eventually they opened the Keidan store together on Gratiot Avenue in Detroit, which was the source of their livelihood for more than thirty-five years. It was a hard pull at first, but together they worked up a trade, with all the family helping out.[30]

Gutsy and determined, the peddler was the epitome of the entrepreneur. In different clothes, he personified the pioneering spirit. An immigrant "greenhorn" with an accent, he needed to learn a new language and new customs quickly, and familiarize himself with the strange territory. Even with minimal capital, he found he could begin to make a small living by his own wits and hard work. Peddling fruits and vegetables, clothing, and sundries, or salvaging anything with commercial value—such as junk, metal, rags, or bottles—frequently represented the immigrant's first step to self-sufficiency. For example, The M. Jacob and Sons Company, today a more than one-hundred-year-old international bottle supply business, was first started in Detroit in this modest way.

Help from the Hebrew Free Loan Association and United Jewish Charities

In 1895, ten Jewish Detroiters who themselves had emigrated from eastern Europe organized a Hebrew Free Loan Association to help the newest arrivals get started. They met daily, and charged membership dues of five cents a week. A 1903 *Detroit Free Press* major story featured this group, which made interest-free loans to newcomers of five dollars to buy stock or fifteen dollars to obtain a horse and wagon.[31] Still operating continuously for over one hundred years, the Hebrew Free Loan Association, in the Jewish tradition of helping people so that they eventually can help themselves, has continued to make loans without interest to enable other new arrivals to start a good life here. The near-perfect rate of repayment has enabled the association to continue to reach out to others in need. Every effort is made to respect the privacy and dignity of the borrowers, many of whom eventually join the group to make loans to others.[32]

In addition, many of the newest eastern European arrivals grouped together in self-help societies with others from their same geographical areas—from their original villages or *shtetls.* These numerous immigrant benevolent organizations, known in Yiddish, the immigrants' common language, as *Landsmanshaften,* acted as lively social and cultural support groups, as well as providing members with vital sick benefits, interest-free loans, and burial rights.

In their time, the self-help societies not only were effective in helping the immigrant adapt to America, but also served as a political voice against the intensifying European anti-Semitism of the 1930s. With the passing of the immigrant generation, however, these colorful Yiddish-based societies inevitably faded in importance; moreover, with the destruction of the eastern European Jewish communities in the Holocaust, the Yiddish language itself was threatened with extinction. Fortunately in recent years, there is renewed interest in the preservation and revival of Yiddish, not only as a language, but as the key to a culture rich in literature, poetry, music, theater, and humor.

Another response to the increasing need for organized services for the growing immigrant population was the United Jewish Charities, founded in 1899 under the sponsorship of Temple Beth El's newly-arrived Rabbi Leo Franklin. The United Jewish Charities processing center for becoming an American was the Detroit Hannah Schloss community center—the Jewish Institute—with its boys' clubs, sewing circles, debating clubs, Boy Scout groups and, particularly, countless sports teams. Playing baseball and basketball was the American way! The stars of these intra-city sports teams were the heroes of the community (see cover).

On a more practical level, the Jewish Institute provided the immigrant with sorely needed milk, showers, and medical services. Dr. Louis Hirschman handled the first medical services at the free clinic, joined by the leading physicians Hugo Freund, Max Ballin, and David Levy. The clinic was open to the public two days a week for children and one day for adults, many with tubercular and cardiac problems.[33]

Contributing to Michigan's Lumber and Copper Economies

The story of Michigan in the second half of the nineteenth century is the story of logging for lumber and mining for copper and iron ore. Michigan was first among the states in lumber production, in 1888 alone producing an astonishing five billion board-feet for the houses, stores, and factories of a growing nation. The dozens of rivers in the state provided good routes to float the logs down to the mills and shipping ports on the Great Lakes. In the space of a few short decades,

however, the boom was over. By 1910, the lumber barons had stripped Michigan forests, leaving behind over fifteen million acres of barren land and numerous declining lumber towns.[34] So too with the copper production of the Upper Peninsula, which boomed in the late nineteenth century and was depleted early in the twentieth century.

Peddling to the outpost farms and to the lumber and mining camps outstate helped to open the frontier and contribute to the development of Michigan. Arriving here in increasing numbers in search of fresh opportunity as the oppression in eastern Europe worsened, the Jewish peddler worked in every area of the state. Striking out into the north

woods by foot, by horse and wagon, by river steamer or on one of the numerous rail lines, he characteristically tried to continue the traditions of his religion–often subsisting on eggs and vegetables in order to observe the dietary laws requiring that meat be kosher. Bringing necessary household articles and supplies to those in the hinterlands—and needles, ribbons, and cloth, as well as a few comforts to the women far from shops—was an essential and welcome service, an important prerequisite to those in the outpost areas.[35]

John Cumming, a former director of the Clarke Historical Library, emphasized the importance of the Jewish peddler/merchant who took the risk of opening the general store in sparsely populated areas, thus providing a needed alternative to the company store. The company store, operated without competition by the owners of the lumber or mining businesses, could charge high fixed prices that caused the workers to incur large debts and become increasing dependent.[36] So while "White Pine was King" in Michigan and copper was fostering a prosperous economy in the Upper Peninsula, the Jewish peddler, often isolated from his fellow countrymen, located himself to bring needed goods to the families of the lumber and mining camps in almost every town and village throughout the state.

Becoming American Women

The spirit, vision, and determination of the Jewish woman helped her family fulfill its dreams of building a new life in Michigan while maintaining its Jewish heritage. Since the father of the family frequently came to America first in order to find a way to earn a living, the mother often was left to make the ocean voyage alone with the children, forever leaving behind the family's ancestral home.[37]

Ninety percent of Jewish immigrants crossed the ocean in steerage class. The steamship companies had advertised heavily in eastern Europe about the lures of America—"where the streets were paved with gold"—in order to sell out the steerage tickets which made their business profitable. Steerage passengers were allowed to bring only one trunk which was stored separately for the voyage and one modest-sized "carry-on" case which was kept at their bunk, along with their treasured

copper pots for cooking in the ship's community kitchen. As many as two thousand double- or triple-decker wooden sleeping bunks were lined up in an open hold. With minimum sanitation facilities, sickness and disease were not uncommon. The voyage itself was a risk.

Traveling from the familiar to the unknown, inevitably an emotional journey, the woman followed her husband to cities or wilderness communities all over Michigan. Then, while running a labor-intensive household and caring for the children, she often worked side-by-side with him to help provide a livelihood for the family. She encouraged the children in their education, reached out to other immigrant families to establish a network of help, participated in the community, and maintained the Jewish traditions. The busy mother also welcomed other relatives and newcomers with bed and board, often for weeks at a time, until they too could get a "start."

Particularly for women, a change of clothing was an essential rite of passage in becoming assimilated—in transforming oneself into a "Yankee." In the early decades of the twentieth century, the working girl replaced her "old country" garments with a skirt and shirtwaist, one with a high neck and leg-of-mutton sleeves. Her waist had to be tightly cinched with a corset, unknown in the villages of eastern Europe. The clumsy laced boot was shed for a high-button pointy-toed heeled shoe. The Gibson girl hairdo was topped with an elaborate hat. In order to belong, it was important to dress the part. The need for yet another adjustment was placed on the family, which was also saving to send for other relatives, to pay the rent, or to send one son to college.[38]

The record of Jewish women who took advantage of higher education, who led groups to care for the sick and needy, who championed the right to vote or the rights of working people, who indeed entered the professions, began with the immigrant generation and continues to this day.

In the Jewish tradition, which emphasizes education and caring for others, the 1845 social reformer Ernestine Rose is but the first example. Social workers, teachers, social activists, business people, doctors, lawyers, artists, scientists, and judges resulted from the educational opportunities open to the Jewish woman and man of Michigan.

In outpost communities throughout Michigan, the immigrant

Rachel and Rabbi Hyman Buchhalter, the rabbi and teacher of Jewish education of Alpena and later of Detroit, and seven of their children. The girls, four of whom attended college and became teachers, are photographed in their best Gibson girl outfits of white shirtwaist, skirt, and poufy hairdos, in contrast to the more traditional dress of their mother. Top, left to right: Sarah, Miriam, Dora, Esther, and Mitchell; bottom: Ida, Hyman, Rachel, and Tena. Circa 1905. Courtesy of the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community of Archives of the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit, Becoming American Women collection.

woman opened her home as a hostess to hold the original religious services for a minimum of ten adults. Until the community grew large enough to establish a synagogue, the family home became the center of Sabbath and holiday worship and festivities. The Jewish Sabbath, beginning on Friday at sundown and lasting until Saturday evening, was observed in the most remote locations. Services in the Fall were held for the High Holidays of the New Year and the Day of Atonement, while the festival of Passover was celebrated in homes in the Spring. In order to observe the traditional dietary laws, kosher meat was brought in by train from Chicago or Detroit. In lumber country, mining territory, or in the urban centers on both peninsulas, this remarkable generation of "greenhorn" Jewish women met the challenge to enable the family not only to transform itself into "real Americans" but also to transfer its Jewish heritage to the New World.

II. A Statewide Presence

By Michigan Central Railway to Ann Arbor and Points West

The Michigan Central Railway which by the 1840s ran as far as Chicago encouraged settlement in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Adrian, Jackson, Marshall, and Kalamazoo.[39] Jacob Hirsch moved to Jackson in 1842, while Mannes Israel settled in Kalamazoo by 1844.[40] Solomon Weil, the first of five brothers to come by train to Ann Arbor, began as a peddler in 1845. In 1848 two years before even the first services were held in Detroit, the first Jewish cemetery in Michigan was dedicated in Ann Arbor, now marked by a plaque at the corner of Huron and Fletcher Streets. By 1860 the five Weil brothers had formed a tannery firm that eventually employed more than one hundred men, an impetus to the local economy. This observant family was the center of traditional Jewish life and practice in Ann Arbor for several decades in mid-century. They maintained a household which followed the traditional kosher dietary laws and held regular Sabbath and holiday services in their home.[41]

At the turn of the century, the William Lanskys chose Ann Arbor to start a scrapyard. They arranged for kosher meats to be delivered from Detroit on the interurban streetcar and provided a college-town boardinghouse for traditionally observant students at the University of

Michigan. One freshman who took his meals at the Lanskys wrote home to his family in Yiddish, "I found a nice big room to rent nearby—for $1.50 a week. It has everything: a bed, a couch, a chair and a rocker, two washstands, a mirror and a closet. And a good reading lamp. You can't beat that!"[42] The Lansky home quickly became the University of Michigan Jewish social center and their own daughter Lillian married one of the boarders, Charlie Smith, a law student from Detroit.

Port Huron

In Port Huron in 1882, the Jewish peddlers, merchants, and scrap dealers paid twenty-five-cents-a-month membership dues to form a Cemetery Association and to purchase land for a cemetery that is still in use. Frequently, this was the first obligation that welded scattered Jewish immigrants into communal activity. In 1924 the Port Huron community built the attractive, modest Mt. Sinai synagogue at the corner of Court and 9th Street, where today the congregation continues to hold services and provide Jewish instruction for its youth.[43]

Pioneers in Pontiac

When immigrant Joseph Barnett and his wife Rachel arrived in Pontiac in 1895 to open a small clothing store, the townspeople gossiped that they would not last six months "out there in the country." They flourished, however, helping to establish the synagogue, serving on the boards of the Parent Teachers Association, the hospital, the Girl Scouts, and participating with their thirteen children in the life of the community. According to the *Pontiac Press,* they were indeed highly regarded as "pioneers in Pontiac's early development."[44]

As the community grew in numbers to thirty families, it made arrangements with Detroit's Temple Beth El and Rabbi Leo Franklin for an extension religious school to educate the community's youth. By the 1930s, two houses of worship were built, Temple Beth Jacob for those who preferred Reform, and the conservative Congregation B'nai Israel.[45] A century after the Barnett's move to Pontiac, however, when the northwestern suburbs of Detroit reached almost as far as the

outskirts of Pontiac, the congregations merged with metro Detroit's Temple Beth El and Congregation Shaarey Zedek.

Following the Lumber Camps to Northeastern Michigan: Saginaw

In the early days of the boom, nearby Saginaw was the logging capital of Michigan, at the center of 105 sawmills and 800 lumber camps that employed 25,000 lumberjacks of every nationality.[46] Saginaw thus became the one of the major gateways to the north for many of the new arrivals from eastern Europe. It attracted the colorful five-foot-tall "Little Jake" Jacob Seligman who, in the mid-nineteenth century, became a prominent but eccentric local clothing merchant and eventually a prosperous banker. When building the Tower Building in Saginaw, he topped it with a life-size cast iron statue of himself—to be seen to this day. The Saginaw Jewish community, which numbered 1,000 in 1917, celebrated its centennial in 1991.

Bay City: A Hub of Lumbering

Bay City was another important center of settlement, already numbering nine hundred Jews by 1907. An immigrant writing back to the family in the old country would tell of a niche of opportunity for an enterprising newcomer in the Bay City area. An "experienced American," a year or two in this country, would offer advice, credit, and a bed to help the new arrival from his extended family or his fellow countryman. The newcomer could begin to make a living by peddling merchandise to the rural families or those in the thriving lumber camps in exchange for scrap that had been collected, which he would then resell.[47] The interdependence of the Jewish peddler and the French Canadian lumberjack contributed to a healthy lumbering economy in this area.

Zundel Glazier arrived in Bay City from Latvia in 1886, pack peddling through the Thumb region. In order to find new opportunity and not to compete with each other, different members of the family branched out to neighboring towns or territories, a common practice. Glazier's son Louis, who had graduated to a horse and wagon, moved

out to establish a store in Kalkaska County where he raised his family of five sons. Zundel's other son Abraham went on to open a store in Vanderbilt, traveling to Bay City for his family's kosher meat and for holiday services.[48]

The similarity of the Bay City lumber economy attracted many Jewish immigrants from the Kurland province in Latvia, which also was a lumbering community. In a typical chain immigration, Kurlanders joined other Kurlanders. Kurlander Wolf Himelhoch and his wife Bluma, initially selling from a pushcart around Bay City, opened the first B. Himelhoch store around 1877 in Caro in Michigan's Thumb region—"providing goods of safe grade at the fairest possible prices." Teaching piano lessons and holding musical recitals in their home, Bluma Himelhoch added a new dimension to the lumbering community of Caro. Following their move to Detroit, they opened the fashionable Himelhoch store on Woodward Avenue in 1907, an attraction for many decades to generations of stylish women.[49]

In order to accommodate both practices, during the lumber boom the thriving Bay City Jewish community established separate Orthodox and Reform congregations—as well as a B'nai Brith Jewish fraternal lodge and the usual mutual assistance societies. A family's primary goal was to provide higher education for at least one child, even though providing the fifteen-dollar tuition at Bay City Junior College may have been a challenge for a struggling newcomer. Eventually, most of the youth in the community achieved a university education and business or professional status.

Close to the nearby lumber camp in Arenac County, in 1895 the parents of Helen Sachse Dushkin opened a general store. Her father also served as the postmaster of Worth, a town that no longer exists; she recalled that the incoming mail was caught on a hook while swinging from the moving train. In her memoirs, she warmly remembers the French-speaking lumberjacks who favored the Sachse store over the company store—and the tall, quiet Indian customers coming to buy lard out of their huge barrel. Following the stripping of the white pine forests and the collapse of the county's timber economy, the family moved to Detroit when Helen was thirteen.[50]

East Tawas

Continuing north along the Lake Huron shore, the father of Joseph Barkman, a native of Poland, had arrived in East Tawas in 1870 at the height of the area's lumbering of white pine. Although fifteen or twenty Jewish families had set up general stores in Iosco County during that era, keeping up their Jewish traditions, most moved on to Bay City and Detroit after the decline of the lumber economy in the early 1900s. A further very practical incentive to move to a larger community was for their marriageable-age daughters to meet prospective Jewish husbands. East Tawas-born Joseph Barkman remained, however, a model citizen and an observant Jew, operating a lumber company, serving on the Election Board and as City Clerk, and donating land on which to build the hospital.[51] A century after his family's first arrival there, in 1968 Joseph Barkman was honored as East Tawas's Citizen of the Year.

Alpena

Temple Beth El in Alpena, another lumbering town, employed one of Detroit's sages, Rabbi Hyman Buchhalter, who moved there in 1885. More recently in the twentieth century, summer rabbis hired from the training seminaries provided Jewish education for Alpena's youth.[52] By 1887 German-born Louis Davidson was employed by his brother-in-law Jacob Levyn, an immigrant from Poland who had established a successful cigar maker business in Alpena. Before the turn of the century, Louis struck out on his own and with his wife Sarah and family "moved west," twenty-two miles to Hillman in Montmorency County where he built the largest department store in town. They followed the Jewish dietary laws in their home, ordering their kosher meat from Chicago. In 1915 a disastrous fire, a common scourge of early Michigan, destroyed twenty-five buildings in Hillman, among them the Davidsons' home, garage, and store. Shortly afterward, the family moved to Detroit,[53] Louis's son Ralph married, and a few years later their grandchildren were born, Dorothy and William Davidson, the current owner of the Detroit Pistons.

William Davidson, co-owner of the Detroit Pistons, looks on as President George Bush congratulates him and Isiah Thomas on winning the NBA championship in 1989 for the 1988–89 season. Courtesy of the Detroit Pistons.

Adventurers in Western and Northern Michigan: Grand Rapids

On the western side of the state, Grand Rapids, a town of three thousand inhabitants, attracted its first Jewish settler—Julius Houseman, who arrived as a youth in the 1850s. By 1883, three decades after his arrival, Houseman, an immigrant Jew from Bavaria, had been elected from the Fifth District of the State of Michigan to the House of Representatives of the United States Congress. He was the only Jewish person from Michigan to serve as a U.S. Congressman until a century later, with the election of Howard Wolpe from the Third, and Sander Levin from the Seventeenth Districts. Before his service in Washington, Houseman had served as mayor of Grand Rapids and in the Michigan State Legislature. He and his cousin Joseph manufactured lumberjack work shirts, which they sold in their own store. Cousin Joseph also was honored by the nearby Chippewas who gave him the name "Little Joe Blackskin" for his frequent mediation of disputes between the tribe and the community.[54]

Grand Rapids, one of the thriving Jewish communities in the state, also counted the Barth brothers as leading citizens during the nineteenth

century. A 1900 history of Grand Rapids, praises Dr. Louis Barth, who had arrived in 1882:

> He devotes more hours to practice than any other physician . . . in Grand Rapids . . . His patronage is enormous . . . His opinion is sought . . . from all parts of the State . . . His private office is supplied with . . . the first x-ray machine in the city . . . The doctor often devotes his attention to the cases of the poor patients . . . he has been obliged to acquaint himself with the customs and language of a new world within the space of 18 years.[55]

Louis's older brother, Jacob Barth, who arrived first in 1863, was a treasurer in the Scottish Rite Masons and honored by the Western Michigan Masons.[56] The Housemans and the Barths were all active leaders in the affairs of the Jewish community of Grand Rapids, organizing and participating in the local Temple Emanuel and in the B'nai Brith lodge. Grand Rapids was one of the centers, along with Bay City and Saginaw, that counted a population of one thousand Jews by 1917.

Muskegon, A Leading Centennial Jewish Community

A few miles further west on the shores of Lake Michigan, twenty-four-year-old Prussian immigrant Samuel Rosen arrived in Muskegon in 1881 to take a job as a clerk in a clothing store, the town's premier store which advertised "fine goods and one price our specialty." Within a few years, Samuel Rosen had purchased the business from its original immigrant proprietor and arranged to bring his brothers, sisters, and parents to Muskegon, where together they ran Rosen Brothers as a leading retail store for over thirty years. One brother, Ike, opened a branch store in Negaunee in the Upper Peninsula. While the older siblings tended to the business—in a commonly-followed immigrant pattern, the youngest brother and sister were sent to the University of Michigan—one graduating as an engineer, and his sister as a teacher.

Even though the lumber economy had declined, Muskegon's strategic location as a port on the Great Lakes and its economic potential encouraged about a dozen other Jewish families to settle there by

Mrs. Helen Padnos, shown swinging an industrial hammer, circa 1920s, became president of Padnos Iron and Steel in Holland. Courtesy of the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives of the Jewish Federation of Detroit, Becoming American Women collection.

the turn of the century. Community leaders, including the Rosens, worked together in the Chamber of Commerce to build the foundation for a new prosperous economy. Soon Muskegon had foundries and factories that became primary suppliers of engines and auto parts to Detroit's new car manufacturers. Henry Rubinsky, a junk metal dealer who, in 1888, had held the first Sabbath services in his home for thirteen families of the Jewish community, became a key supplier to the local foundries in the twentieth century. Run by his sons Harry and Isadore, the successful Muskegon Scrap Material Co. contributed to the area's prosperity. Likewise in the nearby Michigan community of

Holland, Padnos Iron and Steel grew into an essential supplier to western Michigan's foundries and industries—unique because the former president of the company was the mother of the family and her granddaughter is the current president as well as president of the national trade association.

In the period "between the wars," Harold Rosen who had served in World War I in the United States Navy as a gunner in England and his brother Leo who served in the Coast Guard returned to Muskegon. By 1933, they had received a patent and opened the American Grease Stick Company, receiving orders from Fisher Body. The sons of the local pioneer Jewish merchant and leader in the community, their company became the major supplier of solid lubricants to the nation's auto industry. Also adding to the community's industrial base, Jacob Mayer "Kelly" Kaufman arrived in Muskegon in the 1930s to open the American Showcase Company, which employed nearly two hundred workers in the manufacture of display cases.

In 1948, sixty years after the first Sabbath Services at the Rubinsky home, the Jewish community dedicated a new temple, the Muskegon House of Jewish Worship. In 1988, a century after the pioneers' first religious service, the hundred Muskegon Jewish families conducted a yearlong community-wide Jewish Centennial Celebration under the leadership of Sylvia Kaufman. With the publication of a book, school programs, lectures, exhibits, and concerts, the celebration recaptured the history of the Muskegon Jewish community, its role in the history of Michigan, and its mission for the future[57]

Traverse City and Petoskey, Northern Michigan Attractions

In 1868, twenty-year-old Julius Steinberg from Souvalk, Poland traveled further north to work as a pack peddler in Traverse City. Within three years he had saved the $34.40 ship passage for his wife Mary and infant son Jake to join him. Soon other friends emigrating from the Russian-Polish area of eastern Europe settled near the Steinberg family in the lumbering capital of Traverse City. Traverse City was located at the mouth of the Boardman River where the logs floated down to the mill. In an area of great natural beauty, it also provided a natural protected

port for the schooners that carried the lumber to Chicago and points west. Immigrant settlers Aaron Goldfarb and Jacob Greenberg originally made their living as lumberjacks; others practiced trades such as shoemakers or cigar makers. Most, however, were pack peddlers who progressed to horse and wagons and eventually to ownership of dry goods stores in neighboring towns throughout the area.[58]

By 1885, this pioneer Traverse City Jewish community had built a simple white frame synagogue which celebrated its centennial in 1985. The Michigan State Historical Commission in 1977 dedicated an official marker designating Congregation Beth El of Traverse City an historic site: "the oldest synagogue building in continuous use in Michigan." At the turn of the century, Abraham Rubiner, father of Samuel and Judge Charles Rubiner, was employed by the Jewish community there to perform all the traditional roles of cantor, ritual slaughterer of kosher meat, Hebrew teacher who prepared thirteen-year-old boys for their Bar Mitzvah ceremony, and the official licensed to perform Jewish marriages.

By 1896, a sufficient number of observant Jews were making their living in the lumber country of northeastern Michigan to found a second synagogue in nearby Petoskey. Both the Traverse City Congregation Beth El and the Petoskey B'nai Israel continue today as active congregations, attracting worshippers from the increasing permanent year-round "up north" population of the scenic recreational area as well as many vacationers.

Prospering and progressing over a quarter of a century to ownership of a large clothing and dry goods store on East Front Street in Traverse City, Julius Steinberg proceeded to build an elegant two-story Grand Opera House on top of his store. This "finest opera house north of Chicago" opened in 1894 to a highly successful performance of *Hamlet* by the leading American tragedian of the time, Walker Whiteside. With the advent of cinema, however, the popularity of opera and stage shows lasted only through 1915. Steinberg then built the Lyric movie theatre next door, which charged five cents admission for features such as actress Mary Pickford in *The Perils of Pauline.*[59]

Crossing to the Upper Peninsula

According to the newspaper *City of St. Ignace,* Julius's son "Jake" Steinberg, who had clerked in his father's Traverse City store and was a graduate of business college in Chicago, pursued new opportunities for himself with a move to the Upper Peninsula.[60] The younger Steinberg established a successful dry goods store in 1888 in St. Ignace, the town overlooking the Straits of Mackinac. After the turn of the century, Jake moved his family to Detroit where his daughter Anna, working as a secretary for the new corporation General Motors, met and married bookkeeper Meyer Prentis, who eventually served as G.M.'s Treasurer for many decades. But first the young lady and the bookkeeper had to be formally introduced! Today the Prentis family name is renowned as a major supporter of cultural and philanthropic causes.

The discovery of copper and iron deposits in the Upper Peninsula in the 1840s had ushered in an era of great prosperity, even though it lasted only until the mines were used up early in the twentieth century. Driven by a market that increased with the spread of electric power, in 1879 Michigan was producing more copper than any other area in the world.[61] With the 1855 completion of the "Soo" Locks and Canal at Sault Ste. Marie shortcutting the arduous portages around the rapids, an even greater commercial future opened up for the whole north country—the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. True, snowdrifts were as high as ten feet in winter, temperatures dropped to forty below zero, and Kentucky U.S. Senator Henry Clay had called the area "a place quite beyond the remotest settlement in the United States, if not in the moon." But the Jewish immigrant, be he peddler or merchant or scrap dealer, saw the Copper Country as a new area of opportunity. The many hundreds who settled there contributed to the economy by bringing the necessary consumer goods to the mining communities.

In the thriving community of St. Ignace, with twenty-two saloons on the main street, Polish-born William Saulson operated the popular People's Store, and also owned a branch in Seney. Every year from 1884–1892, the newpapers ran a straightforward advertisement announcing his closing for the autumn Jewish Holy Days: "The People's Store of Wm. Saulson will be closed on the following days, on account of Holy

Anna Steinberg, circa 1910, daughter of pioneer Jewish immigrant to the Upper Peninsula "Jake" Steinberg, in her bathing attire. A secretary in General Motors, she met and married Meyer Prentis, who became G.M.'s treasurer. Courtesy of the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives of the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit, Becoming American Women collection.

Days:—No business will be transacted on those days." An observant Jew, Saulson was a prominent citizen: a member of the volunteer fire department, of the local lodges, on the Fourth of July Celebration Committee, a delegate to the Republican County Convention, ward alderman, and in 1888 elected mayor of St. Ignace.[62]

Another *City of St. Ignace* newspaper ad, a prophetic one placed by Saulson in 1884 featuring a drawing of the Brooklyn Bridge, proposed that such a suspension bridge be built across the Straits of Mackinac. With a caption reading " A Glimpse of the Future," seventy-five years

ahead of its opening, Saulson was one of the first to set forth the dream of a bridge to link Michigan's two peninsulas. Opened in 1958 and acclaimed as "The World's Greatest Bridge," the Mackinac Bridge was designed and built by David Steinman, the son of a New York Jewish immigrant. Steinman, an engineering genius who had contracted major bridges around the world as well as the modern expansion of the Brooklyn Bridge, was the author of sixteen technical books on bridge building but also of two volumes of poems about bridges.[63] In his dedication speech, he gave credit to the "faith and dreams and prayers that built this bridge . . . the Mighty Mac."

Jews were not complete strangers to this far north country, ever since Ezekiel Solomon and his partners had established themselves in 1761 as fur traders based at the British Fort Michilimackinac. In 1845, shortly after Michigan became a state, German immigrants Samuel F. Leopold, his sister and his brother Lewis along with Lewis' wife and infant son, had located in Mackinac and established a pioneer fishing business there. Samuel and Lewis sailed their one-mast sloop, the "Agate," to northern fishing outposts on the dangerous and stormy waters of the Great Lakes. Edward Kanter, who later made his reputation when he moved down to Detroit, was employed by the Leopolds when he first came to Mackinac in 1845. Soon the Leopolds collected and shipped as much as a thousand barrels of salted fish to cities like Cleveland. Prospering, they became prominent owners of a fleet of sailing vessels that carried Michigan products between the ports of the Lakes. By the 1850s, shortly after the discovery of copper, the Leopolds and their brother-in-law Julian Austrian were among the first to open shops in the Upper Peninsula at Eagle River, Eagle Harbor, the Cliff Mine, Calumet, and Hancock.[64]

One of the first sons of a Jewish immigrant family to complete his studies at the Detroit College of Medicine in 1873, Dr. Frederick L. Hirschman settled in the town of Republic as surgeon to the Republic Mine Company. Responding in 1873 to an urgent call from the state health officer for help in combating a smallpox epidemic raging in the Upper Peninsula, he remained as a physician in the north country. He traveled by sleigh over the deep snows to distant little communities in order to make "house calls," to deliver babies, or to give help to a

"The Bridge at Mackinac"

David B. Steinman

In the land of Hiawatha,
Where the white man gazed with awe
At a paradise divided
By the straits of Mackinac—
Men are dredging, drilling, blasting,
Battling tides around the clock,
Through the depths of icy water,
Driving caissons down to rock.
Fleets of freighter bring their cargoes
From the forges and the kilns;
Stone and steel—ten thousand barge-loads—
From the quarries, mines, and mills.
Now the towers, mounting skyward,
Reach the heights of airy space.
Hear the rivet-hammers ringing,
Joining steel in strength and grace.
High above the swirling currents,
Parabolic strands are strung;
From the cables, packed with power,
Wonder-spans of steel are hung.
Generations dreamed the crossing;
Doubters shook their heads in scorn,
Brave men vowed that they would build it—
From their faith a bridge was born.
There it spans the miles of water,
Speeding millions on their way—
Bridge of vision, hope, and courage,
Portal to a brighter day.

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Courtesy of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

family with diphtheria or other grave illness. Eventually, he moved to the Upper Peninsula town of Norway to direct the Penn Iron Mining Company Hospital until his own death there at the age of only thirty-eight.[65] The Norway Weekly *Current* of 1886 reported:

> He was at once a physician and a friend . . . We could account of the many instances of attention where he would receive no remuneration for his services. The remains were accompanied by almost the entire community and the Masonic Fraternity . . . and were met by a delegation from the lodge at Ishpeming who will accompany the body to Detroit where burial will take place . . . with Masonic honors.

In 1887 Polish-born Gustav Rosenthal and his American-born wife Fannie had opened a store in the 1,500-person town of Newberry, where their seven children were born and where enough friends joined them to form a small community. In this mostly Scandinavian and Slavic community, Gustav Rosenthal, a religious man, closed his store not only during the autumn Holy Days, but also every Friday evening and Saturday in observance of the Jewish Sabbath.[66] In nearby Manistique, peddler Moses Winkelman and his bride Hattie Freedman, immigrants from Souvalk, Poland, opened the first Winkelman's Store. While their living was so meager at first that they sometimes had to trade merchandise for food, they made their home the center for the celebration of religious holidays for the four Jewish families in town—a typical way of carrying on the Jewish heritage in small towns throughout Michigan. Eventually, one of their sons, Leon, moved and opened a Winkelman's store in Detroit, which grew to a large chain of ladies apparel stores.[67]

The Temple in the Far North: Houghton-Hancock

After two years of walking the wilderness roads carrying his wares in a pack on his back, German-born Jacob Gartner and his son Isadore opened their first store in Hancock in 1886, a store that continues to the present time. By the end of the nineteenth century, Jewish men twice were chosen to be president of the Village of Hancock—N. H. Mandelbaum in 1872–73, and Jacob Baer from 1893–97.[68] Jacob and

Isadore Gartner were active with the group of men who, in 1913, built the synagogue Temple Jacob to serve the more than one hundred Jewish families of the Hancock area. An important occasion, the *Daily Mining Gazette* reported this as the first synagogue built in the history of the Copper Country. Following the decline of both the lumber and the copper economies, many, including Jews, moved from the area, but branches of the Gartner family and the historic Temple Jacob remain to this day. Reinforced by new Jewish families on the faculty of Michigan Technological University, holiday services at the little Temple on the hill on Front Street continue.[69]

The Cohodas Legacy in the Upper Peninsula

Another family that came generations ago to the Upper Peninsula was the Cohodas family. Proud "Yoopers," their strong influence and contributions as solid citizens and community philanthropists remain to this day. The year 1903 was known for the most notorious and tragic Kishinev *pogrom* against the Jews in Russian Poland, which brought about a further sharp increase in emigration of Russian Jews to America. Determined to join her husband in America, Eva Cohodas and six children departed for the north country from Kobylnik in Russian Poland. In Europe the family had made a meager living by buying fruits and vegetables at the nearby farms and selling it at the market in Vilna—which proved to be good training–a necessity after the untimely death of their father shortly after their arrival in America.

For years everyone in the extended Cohodas family worked all kinds of jobs. One of the hard-working sons, Harry, soon met Lillian Levine, the daughter of the red-haired deputy sheriff of Iron Mountain—a Jewish man looking for a Jewish husband for his daughter. With seven daughters at home, the sheriff stood watch at the railway station in order to spot a likely Jewish boy to bring home for dinner! Harry married Lillian in 1912, the first of the Cohodas young people to find a mate.

Harry Cohodas together with his wife Lillian opened a fruit market in Houghton. Joined by his brother Sam, the two brothers then set up a wholesale and retail produce business in 1915 in Houghton with stores in Hancock and Calumet. Tagged by the local Finnish, Croatians, and

Italians in a not-unfriendly fashion as "those two Jewish fellows," Sam and Harry Cohodas developed the nation's third largest wholesale produce industry, a business that included the whole family. After Army service in World War I, Sam in partnership with Harry moved the headquarters to Ishpeming.

As a continuing gesture of appreciation to the far north community in which they achieved success, the family then expanded their concerns to include local and international Jewish philanthropies and support of numerous civic causes in the U.P., including local hospitals and children's camps. Having been forced to drop out of school themselves to support their family, the Cohodases have been special patrons of education at Suomi College, Lake Superior State College, and Northern Michigan University.[70]

Experiments in Farming

In the Thumb region at Bad Axe, on a cooperative mint farm near Saginaw, and in the southwestern corner of the state near Benton Harbor, Jews who had not been allowed to own their own land in the Pale of Settlement in Russia and Poland were trying their hand at farming, with varying degrees of success.[71] In an attempt to create a pastoral agricultural society modeled on that of ancient Israel, twelve idealistic but untrained and inexperienced Jewish settlers in 1891 purchased a dozen parcels of land at Bad Axe, forming a "Palestine Colony" there. Despite their spirited hard work and the help of the philanthropic Martin Butzel of Detroit as well as assistance from the national Baron Maurice deHirsch Fund, success was elusive for this agricultural colony, which struggled along for only a decade. America's disastrous economic "Panic of 1893," combined with the inexperience of the settlers, led to the disappointing failure of this experiment.[72]

In the southwestern corner of the state a few years later, Jews were experiencing greater success in their return to the land. Ben Rosenberg's father, Samuel, had always had a love for the soil. In 1911 he bought a 78-acre, ten-cow farm in Sodus in Berrien County with a loan from the Jewish Agricultural Society, Baron deHirsch's brainchild that helped Jewish immigrants in thirty-two states get started in farming.

Everyone in the family worked the farm, selling the produce at the Benton Harbor Fruit Market—"The World's Largest Cash to Grower Market." Up through the 1940s, more than two dozen Jewish families had successful fruit and vegetable farms around that Benton Harbor area, some of the youngsters progressing to scientific agricultural studies at Michigan State University. The Ben Rosenberg farm grew from 78 acres to 380 acres, the third generation of the original family continuing to farm it on a full-time basis.[73]

When times were difficult, a number of the owners of small farms around South Haven began to take in summer visitors, offering them a taste of rural life and the pleasures of the lakeshore along with kosher dining. The popularity of these early vacation farms led to a flourishing Jewish resort community that lasted for half a century on the shores of Lake Michigan, attracting many thousands of visitors from Michigan, Chicago, and Indiana. This provided a welcome vacation opportunity to Jewish families who at the time were most frequently excluded from other Gentile resorts—some of which not-illegally advertised: "No Jews or dogs allowed." Called "The Catskills of the Midwest," South Haven inspired this memory from Detroit attorney Gerald Cook: "My parents told me that South Haven was *the* place where Jewish singles from the whole Midwest came to meet each other . . . where indeed many married couples first met." The South Haven Jewish community in 1928 established the First Hebrew Congregation on Broadway, which is still in existence though serving a reduced population.[74]

III. The New Era of Industry

New Industrial Opportunities in Lansing

By 1849, Charles, Henry and Emanuel Lederer had established a tannery, soap factory, and general store in Lansing.[75] But after the turn of the century, in addition to storekeeping, peddling, or farming, Michigan was beginning to provide other job opportunities on a large scale to the growing waves of eastern European immigrants. It was the beginning of the industrial era and Ransom E. Olds was taking thousands of orders for his Oldsmobile Curved Dash Runabout. Factory jobs were becoming available in Lansing as well as Detroit. Lansing, first called the "City of Michigan," was the state capital and also the home of Michigan Agricultural College, the predecessor of Michigan State University. By 1906, however, Lansing also boasted more than 215 manufacturers, including the REO Car Works and the Olds Motor Works—"The Largest Automobile Factory in the World." The Jewish population of Lansing thrived in this environment and grew to about 125 at that time.[76]

Detroit: Jews and the Auto Industry

As the lumber economy and the mining era were drawing to a close, Detroit was due to become the center of a new economic world based

on manufacturing and the automobile. At the end of the nineteenth century, many experimental ventures in self-propelled vehicles had been going on simultaneously in America and in Europe. In Vienna, an Austrian Jew, Siegfried Marcus, had succeeded in running the first vehicle powered by an internal combustion engine for a few short city blocks as early as 1865. By 1875, he actually drove an automobile or "strassenwagen" with a four-cycle engine, an ignition, carburetor, and steering wheel at seven miles an hour. An accomplished inventor, Marcus was the guest of honor at the 1898 automotive exhibition held in Vienna, Austria.[77]

In Detroit, mechanics Henry Ford and Charles King made their mark in history in 1894 by driving a buggy with a gasoline engine. It was the success of Ford's 1908 famous Model T, however, that launched a flourishing industry for the mass market and made Detroit the automobile capital of the world. In the first decade of the twentieth century, there were more than one hundred different companies that were manufacturing a variety of automobiles in Detroit and Jewish people were participating in this explosion of invention and manufacturing.[78]

The talented Detroit-born Max Grabowsky and his brother Morris, under the name of the Rapid Motor Vehicle Company, in 1902 manufactured the first gasoline powered truck to be used in Detroit. Members of Temple Beth El, Max went on in 1908 to form the Grabowsky Power Wagon Company with Bernard Ginsburg as a partner. They built a four-story plant in Detroit designed by architect Albert Kahn and advertised that the world would be covered with Grabowsky trucks.

Participating in the wave of American inventiveness that transformed the nation, in 1903 Rabbi Judah Levin, who had emigrated from Poland, received United States patents for his invention of an adding and subtracting machine. Levin, with a keen mind trained in logic by Talmudic studies in European academies, and with a talent for mathematics, nevertheless felt restrained by his rabbinic duties from pursuing the invention commercially. The early Grabowsky factory had fabricated the working models, an operative machine which is now in the collection of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.[79] At this same time, Abe Goldman, whose family had arrived in America in the 1880s, was manufacturing a two-passenger sporty roadster, the Marvel Auto,

Abe Goldman and his sister Ray in the $800 Marvel Auto, a roadster that he manufactured and sold in 1907. Courtesy of the Leonard N. Simons Jewish Community Archives of the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit.

for $800. But by 1910, William Durant was buying up all the small auto companies that he could, including these Jewish-owned companies, to create the General Motors Company.[80]

Will Durant soon hired the bookkeeper Meyer Prentis, a Jewish immigrant who had attended night school in St. Louis who, in 1919, became Treasurer of General Motors Corporation. Prentis worked closely with Durant for over forty years to help lead the company to success.

Louis Mendelssohn and his brother Aaron were officers of the Board of Directors of Fisher Body Corporation, the supplier to General Motors, which was absorbed as a division in 1926.

When Henry Ford in 1912 wanted to create a plant in Highland Park that would house a continuously moving assembly line all under one roof, he hired the forward-looking architect Albert Kahn. Kahn, the immigrant son of a rabbi, continued until his death in 1942 to be commissioned to design plants for Ford Motor Company, including the Rouge Plant complex. He became known world-wide as "the father of

modern factory design," working on plants for the Grabowsky Power Wagon, Burroughs Adding Machine, Packard Motor Car, the Hudson Motor Car, the Dodge plant, the Buick Motor Car in Flint, and industrial plants overseas as well as the General Motors Building and the Fisher Building in Detroit.[81]

A. E. Barit, a member of Temple Beth El, started with the Hudson Motor Car Company in 1910, and became president in 1936, remaining until 1954, when shortly thereafter George Romney succeeded him. In addition, in the 1920s the Chrysler Corporation hired a brilliant graduate of the Cornell University College of Engineering, Robert Janeway, another member of Temple Beth El, who headed an innovative engineering group in the company for three decades.

The local Jewish community took great pride in the achievements of these men—each the first generation of his family educated in America. These isolated Jewish men in responsible positions at major corporations were notable exceptions, however. Even though some had actively participated in the early development of the industry, for the most part professionally-trained Jewish people found themselves excluded for many decades in the twentieth century from the executive suites of the "Big Three" of the automobile industry. This was part of the pattern of discrimination which was prevalent during those years, and which continued for many decades.

One response to the exclusion from employment at these major corporations was for Jewish entrepreneurs to establish their own manufacturing shops as suppliers to the auto industry—shops which eventually grew into thriving industries. Early on, Abraham Srere at Acme Mills and Sidney Allen at Allen Industries were producing fabrics for automobiles. Emma and her young husband Morris Schaver did laundry for the new Chrysler Corporation. They delivered the clean overalls daily by streetcar, but pretended they had a truck parked around the corner—to give the impression that they were a successful business, which they eventually became. Later, immigrant Sam Grand, a graduate engineer, was manufacturing parts for the auto plants, as was Irwin Green. Joseph Epel, also an engineer, opened a chemical plant; Edward Levy was supplying slag for the Ford Motor Company, while many independent shops manufactured coveralls or laundered uniforms for the

factories. The Gershenson brothers, Aaron, Charles, and Samuel, opened Ned's Auto Supply to provide service to car owners and Max Fisher established the Marathon Oil Company. The Milgrom family started a paint company that in later years supplied the paint for the Mackinac Bridge; and Walter Field founded the Mac-O-Lac Paint Company. Albert Altman found his niche teaching aeronautical engineering at the University of Detroit.

Attracted by the opportunities of the new industrial economy, the Jewish population of Detroit increased dramatically to 35,000 by 1917. Many Jewish immigrants were placed in manual jobs in manufacturing by the Industrial Removal Office of New York City, another endeavor conceived and funded by the philanthropist Baron deHirsch to help immigrant Jews achieve economic self-sufficiency. Some Jews found jobs in the new Ford automotive plants, attracted by the radical promise of five dollars a day. Despite the limitations of that promise—long hours, menial repetitive work, and intrusion by Ford's social workers into the worker's personal lives–the economic security of those jobs was treasured by those who held them. [82] In total, 8.2% of Detroit's Jews worked in the automobile industry.

Jews in the Labor Movement

A natural outgrowth of the early twentieth century industrialization in Detroit was the development of labor unions, and indeed Jewish workers were part of that movement. Representing a growing social consciousness, the early trade union movement provided a necessary check on the exploitation of workers and on the flagrantly harsh practices that were not uncommon in factories—use of child labor, arduous conditions for women, excessively low wages, oppressively long hours, and lack of attention to safety. Bitterly opposed to the formation of labor unions, Detroit employers used all their power, often militantly, to oppose the organizing of workers. Therefore, until the right to organize was protected by law, local organizing efforts often were met with violence.

As early as the 1890s, Samuel Goldwater had been elected head of the Cigarmakers Union in Detroit, while at the turn of the century groups of Jewish workers formed locals of capmakers, of cutters, and of

Myra Wolfgang, 1914–1976

Wolfgang was the organizer of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union when she herself was working as a waitress at the age of twenty-three, after having to leave college during the Depression. In 1937 when Michigan had become the cradle of organized labor, she led an eight-day strike at Woolworth's and negotiated their first union contract. Continuing throughout her life to work for labor legislation and women's rights, she fought for the passage of Michigan's minimum wage law in 1964. Her daughter, Laura Green, in a 1981 interview said: "She won good working conditions for people at the bottom of the heap and helped them lift themselves up a few notches."

Wolfgang was brought to Detroit as a baby by her eastern European-born parents, was married to an attorney, and had two daughters. In later years she was elected the first woman vice-president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' and Bartenders International Union. By that time, 85% of her local union were women and more than a third were African American.

Known for her effective speech, Wolfgang said: "You couldn't be an observer back in the 1930s. You had to be a participant." She also explained: "Dissent is the very root of trade unionism. Had there been no dissenters, there would be no unions today." When addressing a Congressional committee in 1964 during a struggle with Hugh Hefner to organize the bunnies of the Playboy Club, she stated: "This is a gross perpetuation of the lewd idea that women should be obscene but not heard." And in 1974, at the founding convention of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, she declared: "There are 3,000 women here in Chicago and they didn't come to swap recipes!" Shortly before her death, Wolfgang was awarded Michigan State University's Distinguished Citizens's Award (Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University).

carpenters. Spanning the next five decades Jewish names continue to appear in trade union history, including the prominent Myra Wolfgang, who organized the waitress union and then continued working for the concerns of poor women. During this formative time, many determined individuals worked with Walter Reuther to organize trade unions

Myra Wolfgang leading hotel and restaurant workers in their effort to organize. Courtesy of the Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.

in the auto industry: Bob Kantor at the infamous 1937 Ford "Battle of the Overpass;" Sam Fishman, a president of the Michigan AFL-CIO; Bernard Firestone, vice president of Detroit AFL-CIO; Nat Weinberg, Reuther's assistant; May Wolf, Reuther's wife; and Irving Bluestone, vice-president of the UAW who later served as Wayne State University Professor of Labor Studies. Moreover, the labor lawyer Maurice Sugar proved to be a champion of the labor movement, highly regarded by the Jewish community as a man of great dignity and intelligence.[83]

In tempo with the times, Isaac Litwak was advocating for the rights of workers at the Ford Motor Highland Park foundry as early as 1913. Successfully keeping his locals free of mob influence, Litwak later was instrumental in organizing the Jewish Laundry Drivers Union and a local of the Teamsters Laundry Drivers. Also at the Ford Motor Company in 1913, Matilda Rabinowitz, a member of an early union

there, was addressing an audience of thousands of workers during the lunch break when she was arrested for this activity.[84] Arrests and violent confrontations have lessened as legislation in the twentieth century has guaranteed the workers' right to organize and right to collective bargaining, but the early days of the trade union movement were days of challenge and danger for Jews and non-Jews alike.

IV. World War I and Its Aftermath

The Great War

Intense patriotism was a hallmark of the American Jew. Enlistments of Jews in the fighting forces of World War I, even as in the Civil War, were disproportionately much higher than the population ratio. The ranks of the thousands of Michigan Jewish servicemen included Cohodases from the Upper Peninsula, the Rosen brothers from Muskegon, and Jack Wertheimer and Julius Berman from Detroit. During this "Great War," rabbis sermonized to sell Liberty Loan war bonds; ladies' clubs rolled bandages; synagogues and temples raised funds for the Red Cross. The high school boys in the Philomathic Debating Club of the Hannah Schloss Center wrote letters to its alumni who were in the service, cheering on the "doughboys who were fighting for Uncle Sam."[85]

The end of this "war to make the world safe for democracy" signaled encouragement for the future establishment of a Jewish state in the land of Israel. Detroiters Norman Cottler and Joseph Sandweiss and other Michigan men had fought during World War I in the Middle East in the volunteer Jewish Legion. They won high praise for helping the British liberate Palestine from Turkey, which had been an ally of Germany and Austria.[86] In 1917 Lord Balfour of Britain issued the Balfour Declaration, supporting "the establishment in Palestine of a national

Jack Wertheimer, who enlisted in the U.S. Navy in World War I, shown on his troopship and with his father. Courtesy of the archives of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, gift of Lois Lipnik.

home for the Jewish people." Detroiter Isadore Levin, a young Harvard-graduate attorney who had served as captain in the American fighting forces in France, was invited to the Versailles Peace Conference as legal advisor to the official Zionist delegation that represented the interests of a future homeland. Working with Chaim Weizmann, who became the first president of the new state of Israel in 1948, Levin's assignment involved drafting the constitutional framework or fundamental charter, the mandate for a future government of Palestine.

At this time, the Jewish people had not yet faced the historical disaster of the Hitler era—the disenfranchisement, interment, and destruction that would highlight the absolute necessity of a homeland. Nevertheless, for the next three decades many Michigan Jews worked earnestly in the Zionist ranks for the eventual establishment of the state

of Israel. During those years, Albert Einstein, Louis Brandeis, Golda Meir, and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt were among the many dignitaries who came here as speakers to express support of a Jewish homeland.[87]

Education continued to be the entry ticket to the American dream for young Jewish men and women. Earlier generations had attended the Detroit College of Medicine, the University of Michigan, and the School of Agriculture at Lansing.[88] After World War I, the College of the City of Detroit provided an additional viable choice to students who desired a higher education. In establishing the college, David McKenzie appointed to the original faculty Samuel M. Levin, who became the first local Jewish college professor and remained at the university as chair of the department of economics for over forty years.

Affordable and accessible by bus to the student who lived at home, the College of the City of Detroit evolved into Wayne State University, attracting a large Jewish enrollment. "It was a little Athens there," one former student remembered. Young Jewish men and women trained to become teachers, pharmacists, accountants, lawyers, doctors, and social workers. During this enlightened time, educated women such as young lawyer Regine Freund Cohane and social worker Golda Mayer Krolik campaigned and marched for women's suffrage—a goal realized with the 1920 passage of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote.

Diversity and Cooperation

Inevitable differences of opinion existed on several levels in the Detroit Jewish community at the time of the crest of the mass immigration early in the 1920s. Transplanted to America, proponents of varying viewpoints and ideologies had established organizations and clubs to work toward their various goals. Disagreements existed between Zionists and anti-Zionists, between proponents of capitalism and Socialists, between Reform Jews and the Traditionalists, or Orthodox and Conservative, and the religious versus the secularists.

Well-known tensions existed between the established German Jew and the new immigrant from Eastern Europe. Less recognized was the

social distance between the masses of "greenhorn" immigrants and the already acculturated second- and third-generation American Jews, whether they originated from Eastern Europe or Germany. If their children were already college-educated and they had entered the mainstream of American life, those of the second and third generation were considered acculturated. In addition, there was disagreement between those trying to retain Jewish identity and those attempting to assimilate entirely.

Despite these differences, leaders from the established Detroit Jewish community continued to work together to expand the relief and social services of the United Jewish Charities, which had been established in 1899. In Detroit this leadership represented a little- recognized cooperative alliance of the elite, which by then included both acculturated German and Eastern European Jews. The American German Jews—Butzel, Heineman, Schloss, Kahn, and Rabbi Leo Franklin—shared leadership with the established Americans from eastern Europe—such as D. W. Simons, Nate Shapero, Abraham Srere, Charles Rubiner, Irwin Cohn, and Judge Harry Keidan.

Under the visionary leadership of Fred M. Butzel, called "Detroit's Most Valuable Citizen" by the *Detroit News*, the existing agencies combined in 1926 to form the Detroit Jewish Welfare Federation—a paceseter organization designed to meet the community's expanding relief and social service needs. This was an outgrowth of the United Jewish Charities of 1899. The Federation included the community center for recreation and socializing; the Fresh Air Society summer camp; the United Hebrew Schools; the social service bureau; the North End Clinic for health care for the needy; the homes for the aged and for the orphans, and the original Hebrew Free Loan Association, which had its humble origins in the 1890s. Today, internationally-acclaimed leaders such as Max Fisher continue their inspired leadership in local Federation philanthropy and social service.

Between the Wars: Anti-Immigration Legislation

The 1920s in Michigan and in America—the period labeled "between the wars"—was a period of great contrasts and grave consequences. It

was a time of prosperity for some to be followed by the "bust" of the Depression; it was the era of the frivolity of the "Flappers," the "Charleston," and the Jazz Age, along with the dour restrictions of the unsuccessful Prohibition Amendment. It was a decade in Detroit where literally thousands of hard-working family-oriented Jewish immigrants were struggling to provide for themselves economically and to educate their children for a brighter future. In the meantime, during Prohibition the notorious criminals in the Purple Gang, all of whom were eventually either jailed or murdered, were making headlines that troubled the community for generations to come.[89]

Moreover, in a profound irony, after the war that would "make the world safe for democracy" American society entered a period of extreme nationalism and intolerance along with serious hostility to minority and nonconformist groups. These minorities included Jews, blacks, Catholics, foreigners, labor organizers, "liberals," socialists, and even pacifists. Anticipating the fascist movement, the Ku Klux Klan flourished and social critics and non-conformists were labeled "un-American," "Communist" or "pinko." In a profound decision, the distinguished Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote that "Public discussion is a political duty . . . The Constitution protects against the occasional tyrannies of governing majorities" and he cautioned against the "hate which menaces stable government."[90] In other decisions responding to cases before the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes and Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes also prophetically warned against the intolerance of the time. But the tide of violence did not stop.[91]

In this atmosphere of paranoia, Congress passed the Immigration Restriction Act of 1924, to be followed in 1929 with an even more restrictive National Origins Act that reduced the total of immigrants to only 150,000 annually. While oppression in eastern Europe was proving increasingly dangerous for the Jew and fascism was emerging in Germany, this new policy of government exclusion of immigrants, particularly quotas against those from eastern Europe, effectively closed the door to immigration to America by Jewish people. The xenophobic fears that led to this legislation in truth were not borne out by America's experience with immigration. Indeed, after half a century of

unprecedented immigration, during which Jews established themselves in America, the standard of living in the United States had continued to rise, to set the pace, in fact, for the world.[92] At the turn of the century, President Grover Cleveland had condemned restrictive immigration policies as "a radical departure from our national policy" and had indicated that abundant immigration had strengthened the nation. Other rational voices continued to remind the nation that those who exclude new immigrants forget their own immigrant forbears. Nevertheless, by 1924–29, this exclusionary policy was the law of the land.

In the 1920s, the annihilation of the European Jewish people by the Nazis in the Holocaust of World War II was certainly never anticipated. The Nazi specter in the future that condemned generations to death was not accurately foreseen. The American anti-immigration legislation of 1924 and 1929, however, effectively closed the doors to men, women, and children who vainly sought refuge here and whose lives could have been saved. Those few, who in the 1930s found legal means to relocate to the United States and Detroit, whole-heartedly embraced the American dream and fulfilled Grover Cleveland's opinion that immigration would strengthen the nation. During World War II, the Town Crier column of the *Detroit Free Press* (23 March 1945) devotes a column to the "refugee boys . . . who are giving their lives and limbs for a country they knew for its kindness." In every way the refugee strove to become a worthwhile citizen of his new home.

Sobered by Anti-Semitism

In the isolationist, intolerant atmosphere during the prosperous post-World War I period, Jews everywhere were sobered by the outburst of blatant anti-Semitism by Henry Ford, who as an employer had been a hero to so many. Ford's attacks began in the newspaper *The Dearborn Independent*—"harsh accusations against Jews, [continuing] for 91 straight weeks in 1920–22." David L. Lewis, University of Michigan professor of business history who has written widely on this issue, said that this series "had no parallel in all of the literature of anti-Semitism except *Mein Kampf.*"[93]

Coming to America: Refugees on board ship brought to Detroit to escape the Nazi regime, 1938. The woman is Ruth Weintraub Kent. A handwritten caption on the original reads: "Larry, Ruth, and Jack, Atlantic crossing—AMERICA—My Great Country." Courtesy of the Archives of Congregation Shaarey Zedek.

Ford revived and distributed worldwide the inflammatory *Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* a most potent piece of hate literature that was later proven a forgery. Revealed to be written by an agent of the Czarist secret police in 1905, the *Protocols* alleged a false plot for the Jewish conquest of the world. Eventually Henry Ford issued apologies on the advice of business and legal advisors, but the distribution of the *Protocols* continues to surface even to this day, causing grave repercussions. To their credit, Ford's son, Edsel, and grandson, Henry Ford II, when they were rebuilding the company after World War II, sincerely tried to disavow any connection to such anti-Semitic activity.[94]

No matter what level of identification a Jew chose, the pre–World War II Ford attacks, followed by the 1930s radio charges by Royal Oak priest Father Charles Coughlin, represented a grave and troubling threat. In addition, Coughlin published a weekly journal, *Social Justice,* which had its own incendiary propaganda.[95] All this occurred at the time of Hitler's rise to power in Nazi Germany. The activist veteran editor of the *Detroit Jewish News,* Philip Slomovitz, had several fruitless

meetings with Father Coughlin in a vain attempt to curtail him, but it was not until the 1940s that the federal government and then the Vatican silenced the radio priest.[96] The outrageous attacks, even in a land of guaranteed rights, had substituted feelings of vulnerability for complacency and created an awareness of the need to protect the principles of a democratic society for all people.[97]

Discrimination, which had been experienced in corporate employment in the automotive companies, also existed on numerous other levels making even the most educated and acculturated Jew acutely aware of his vulnerability to prejudice. Restrictions on admissions to certain universities or professional schools, restrictions on admissions of Jewish physicians to the staffs of local hospitals or employment in Gentile law firms, written exclusionary restrictions on the sale of property in certain neighborhoods, and exclusion from leading local private clubs clearly limited opportunity but, nonetheless, were a fact of life.

Working Together for Civil Rights

With a shared understanding of the hardships of discrimination, activist Jewish individuals and organizations, as early as the 1920s, worked in cooperation with African Americans to bring about change through the civil rights movement. In 1926, Maurice Sugar had assisted Clarence Darrow in the noted acquittal of Dr. Ossian Sweet, a black man who had defended himself when threatened by mobs in his new home in a white neighborhood. In the Mississippi Freedom Project organized by Ernest Goodman in 1964, young attorneys Ronald Karp, Irving Tukel, Lawrence Warren, and Allen Zemmol joined with black attorneys Anna Diggs and Claudia Morcom in order to register black voters for the first time. Reflecting on those crisis days, current Federal District Judge Anna Diggs Taylor said: "No one felt safe. But unless the work was done by all the attorneys who went down there, nothing at all would have changed." During the tense days following the civil disorders in Detroit in 1967, Rabbi Morris Adler and Stanley Winkelman, and Avern Cohn, Joyce Mittenthal, and Alan Schwartz, among others, were often called upon to provide visionary leadership to restore vitality to the city.[98]

The Detroit Chapters of the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Community Council, and the American Jewish Committee to this day are involved with the African American community to combat discrimination in its many guises. Only with the difficult passage by the U.S. Congress of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the U.S. Fair Housing Act did overt discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation diminish. A century after the Civil War, the groundbreaking legislation of the 1960s provided the needed protections of the rule of law to African Americans, to Jewish people, and to other minorities. As the struggle for full equality continues, the work in human relations goes on.

Two Heroes—Mark Twain and Hank Greenberg

An outspoken opponent of prejudice and a friend of the Jewish people was the literary celebrity Mark Twain, who made visits in the '20s and '30s to his daughter and her husband in their Boston Boulevard home in Detroit. Twain's daughter, Clara Clemens, was married to Ossip Gabrilowitsch, a Russian-born Jew who was the conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra from 1919 to 1936. Detroit's Orchestra Hall, still in use and considered acoustically perfect, was built in 1919 as a condition for Gabrilowitsch to accept the Detroit position. Twain (Samuel Clemens) had written: "All things are mortal but the Jew. All other forces pass–the Egyptian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman—but he remains . . . He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him."[99] Although perhaps representing wishful thinking, certainly these were encouraging words of optimism during the threatening years of the 1930s and 1940s.[100]

A welcome bright light during the crisis days of the rise of Hitler and of the Depression was the baseball player Hank Greenberg, who joined the team in 1933 to become a hero to Tiger fans and particularly to Jews old and young, female and male. Despite its other problems, the community was united by sports—paying fifty-five cents for a seat in the bleachers, 55,000 fans cheered the big first baseman's home runs. During the 1934 season, with a pennant at stake, Greenberg opted out

Hank Greenberg at bat for the Detroit Tigers. Courtesy of Stephen D. Greenberg.

of playing on the holy day of Yom Kippur and instead attended the religious services at the Shaarey Zedek synagogue, creating quite a stir in the congregation and a legendary story in sports history. Despite losing that game, the Tigers won the pennant that year.

By this time a community idol, in 1935 Greenberg led the team to the World Series with his record batting and was selected as the American League's Most Valuable Player.[101] Following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entrance into World War II, Greenberg enlisted in the U.S. Army, returning in 1945 after peace was declared in Europe to hit more home runs for the Tigers.

A Tribute to Hank Greenberg

Edgar A. Guest

from The Detroit Free Press, 1934

Now the Irish didn't like it
When they heard of Greenberg's fame
For they thought a good first baseman
Should possess an Irish name;

And the Murphys and Mulrooneys
Said they never dreamed they'd see
A Jewish boy from Bronxville
Out where Casey used to be.

And in the early days of April
Not a Dugan tipped his hat
Or prayed to see a "double"
When Hank Greenberg came to bat.

In July the Irish wondered
Where he ever learned to play.
He makes me think of Casey
Old Man Murphy dared to say;

And with 57 doubles
And a score of homers made
The respect they had for Greenberg
Was being openly displayed.

But on the Jewish New Year
When Hank Greenberg came to bat
And made two home runs off pitcher Rhodes—
They cheered like mad for that

Came Yom Kippur, holy fast day
Worldwide over to the Jew—
And Hank Greenberg to his teaching
And the old tradition true

Spent the day among his people
And he didn't come to play.
Said Murphy to Mulrooney
"We shall lose the game today!

We shall miss him on the infield
And shall miss him at the bat,
But he's true to his religion—
And I honor him for that!"

V. The Second World War and Its Legacy

The World Struggle for Freedom

In World War II, as in the Civil War and in World War I, there was intense patriotism and a high percentage of participation by Jewish servicemen and women from Michigan on every front and in every branch of the service. In the effort to defeat the forces of fascism in their menacing threat to control the world, more than 10,000 Michigan Jews served with their fellow Americans in the Armed Forces. In the line of duty, 225 of these young people were killed in the service of their country.

William J. Weinstein, who enlisted in the United States Marines, said: "I wanted to fight Hitler." As company commanding officer, he saw action against the Japanese at Iwo Jima and other battles in the Pacific and was decorated with the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. After the war, Weinstein went on to become a major general in the Marine Corps Reserves.

Rudy Newman recalls, "In 1943, when I was 16, I convinced my mother to sign papers stating that I was 17 so I could join the U.S. Navy and become a pilot." Newman served on the aircraft carrier USS Lexington, flying F6F Hellcats until the war ended.

Dr. Milton Steinhardt, already past the age to be drafted, said, "I was alert to the danger of Hitler and volunteered to serve." An immigrant

from Poland in the 1920s, he landed at Omaha Beach in the 1944 D-Day invasion and fought with his division all across Europe until the surrender of Germany in May, 1945. Steinhardt helped to liberate concentration camps and saw at first hand the grim evidence of the mass murders there.[102] Other G.I.s, even including the Allied Commander General Dwight Eisenhower, were shocked and sickened when they witnessed the reality of the extermination carried on in the camps. Steinhardt reported, "To those who questioned the reports of a Nazi genocide, this was an eye-opener." The war had revealed the awful truth of what had happened in concentration camps.

Refugees from Germany who were among the few who that had been brought to Detroit as youngsters in the 1930s to escape the growing Nazi threats distinguished themselves in the fighting forces and brought honor to their new country. The only members of their family who escaped out of Europe, Leo Moritz earned a Bronze Star for bravery, but his brother Sigmund died heroically in France trying to save an American buddy. Zalman Lopato, born in Poland, lost a leg at the Anzio beachhead. Robert Mathis, gave his life for his country in the far Pacific. Benno Levi, who was brought here as a youngster in 1935, was awarded the Silver Star on Guam, "at great risk" saving the lives of his whole company of soldiers.[103]

The Medal of Honor, the country's highest honor, was awarded posthumously to Second Lieutenant Raymond Zussman of Hamtramck. As Tank Platoon commander in the 1944 invasion of southern France, Zussman led a lightning strike that resulted in the taking of ninety-two prisoners, the death of eighteen enemy soldiers, and the successful capture of the target town for the American army. The twenty-six year old was decorated for his special heroism.[104]

Women were equally patriotic in World War II, serving in many capacities around the world and at home. Caroline Brown served in the WAVES; her sister Rosalie in the Red Cross. Annetta Miller did duty as an Army nurse in England. Henrietta Gordon Kaplan of Petoskey enlisted as a WAC and became a Second Lieutenant. Pearl Feldman, a Sergeant-Major in the WACs, landed in Normandy and was with the troops in the European theatre. Ethel Grossman was an Army nurse in the Pacific Theatre; Bess Gorelick was a U.S. Marine. The physician,

The President of the United States takes pride in awarding the MEDAL of HONOR posthumously to SECOND LIEUTENANT RAYMOND ZUSSMAN, CAVALRY, UNITED STATES ARMY

For serves as forth in the following CITATION:

"On 12 September 1944, Lieutenant Zussman was in command of two tanks operating with an infantry company in the attack on enemy forces occupying the town of Noroy le Bourg, France. At 1900 hours his command tank bogged down. Throughout the ensuing action, armed only with a carbine, he reconnoitered alone on foot far in advance of his remaining tank and the infantry, returning only from time to time to designate targets, direct the action of the tank and turn over to the infantry the numerous German soldiers he had caused to surrender. He located a road block and directed his tank to destroy it. Fully exposed to fire from an enemy position only fifty yards distant he stood by his tank directing its fire. Three Germans were killed and eight surrendered. Again he walked before his tank leading it against an enemy held group of houses, machine gun and small arms fire kicking up the dust at his feet. The tank fire broke the resistance and twenty enemy soldiers surrendered. Going forward again alone he rushed an enemy occupied house from which the Germans fired on him and threw grenades in his path. After a brief fire fight he signaled his tank to come up and fire on the house. Eleven German soldiers were killed and fifteen surrendered. Going on alone he disappeared around a street corner, the fire of his carbine could be heard and in a few minutes he reappeared driving thirty prisoners before him. Under Lieutenant Zussman's heroic and inspiring leadership eighteen enemy soldiers were killed and ninety two captured."

—(signed) Harry Truman

Courtesy of Milton Y. Zussman

Colonel Clara Raven, was assigned to care for our soldiers in France.[105] In addition, ten Michiganians served as military chaplains, many at the front lines.

Men, women and children on the home front also were united in helping to defend liberty and to defeat the Axis menace and win the war. A personification of "Rosie the Riveter," Rose Miller worked at the

Dodge Motor assembly line, one of the "arsenals of democracy" manufacturing trucks for the front lines. Wanting to make a difference, Rose Miller inserted personal notes of blessing and good luck to the fighting men who would eventually receive the trucks that she handled. Immigrants Pearl and Joseph Weiss, with two sons in service, rode the bus each night to work at the Willow Run aircraft plant making B-24 Liberator bombers for the war effort. Men past the age for active service trained as air raid wardens. Children wrote V-mail letters to their families in the service, and everyone bought War Bonds, tilled Victory Gardens, and worked for the Red Cross.

Looking back, William Greenberg, a past Commander of the Michigan Jewish War Veterans, said: "Veterans, and Jewish veterans, have fought against those trying to take away the blessings of liberty from Jamestown to Yorktown to the present time." When the lights of freedom literally were being extinguished all over the world, the record of Jewish participation in World War II helped to bring about the 1945 Allied victory over the Fascist powers, a victory for all mankind.

Postwar

The cataclysmic historic events of the rise of Hitler, the Holocaust, and the establishment of the state of Israel as a Jewish homeland profoundly altered not only the consciousness of Jews but of all the world. Support for Jewish statehood intensified as the world learned about the destruction of European Jewry. Although in-depth discussion of these events would be outside the scope of this book, matters of such enormity cannot be overlooked because of their profound impact on generations to come. In a gesture of support, president of the Ford Motor Company Henry Ford II presented the gift of a Lincoln limousine to Chaim Weizmann, when he was inaugurated as Israel's first president. Clearly, Jewish identity soared with the recognition by President Harry Truman and the government of the United States of the establishment of the state of Israel on 14 May 1948.

The end of World War II signaled the return of the G.I.s to their Michigan hometowns and a resurgence of family and community life. Tens of thousands availed themselves of higher educations under the

G.I. Bill, and young men and women made up for lost time by increasing the size of their families and building new homes. Adding to the building boom, new Jewish synagogues and temples, schools, and communal institutions were constructed to follow the young families' move to the suburbs.

As part of that building boom, in 1953 the Detroit Jewish community opened the doors of a major Jewish hospital, Sinai Hospital, which originally had been advocated forty years earlier. Sinai Hospital not only provided staff positions for Jewish as well as non-Jewish doctors and meals that met the dietary restrictions of traditionally observant patients, but also made significant contributions to medical research and education. A source of personal and community pride, through the second half of the twentieth century Sinai served as a highly respected institution in Detroit and the medical community with a reputation for providing top quality care. With the major changes in recent years in the economics of health care institutions, however, the hospital was bought by the Detroit Medical Center and in 1999 was merged as Sinai/Grace.[106]

Four decades after World War II, the Holocaust Memorial Center was established in 1984 in West Bloomfield by Rabbi Charles Rosenzveig to document the destruction of European Jewish communities and their culture and to sensitize future generations to the dangers of prejudice. In order to prevent history from repeating itself, this first such center in the nation has hosted over a million and a half students and continues to welcome 100,000 visitors annually, fulfilling its mission of educating all people to break the cycle of racism.

The Question of Jewish Identity

In partial answer to the questions raised by the issue of Jewish identity, a 1999 report in the *American Jewish Yearbook* reveals that approximately 13,500 Jews live in Michigan cities outside of Detroit.[107] According to this publication, the Jewish population of the metropolitan Detroit area is estimated at 94,000, ranking it tenth in the country in Jewish population, with most residing in the suburbs. It is interesting that a population study in 1936 also reported approximately the same number—94,000 Jews in Detroit. Reflecting the traditional

emphasis on education, a majority of Detroit-area Jewish men and women today have four-year college degrees, of course with an even greater number having attended some college. More than 10% have professional degrees.[108] In the metro-Detroit area, the 1990 survey reveals that about one-fifth own or manage a business and about one-third are professionals—doctors, dentists, lawyers, accountants, teachers, or social workers. Nevertheless, pockets of low income remain, especially among the aging and single parents. The majority, having achieved educational and economic goals subsequent to the menial beginnings of the immigrant generation, are concerned about Jewish continuity and are providing for some Jewish education for their children. Sixty percent of Jewish children are enrolled in some sort of Jewish schooling, and more than 80% of Jewish teenagers have at some time received some formal Jewish education.

Significantly, a majority of Jewish families contribute not only to Jewish philanthropies but support the causes of the greater community. Clearly, the values of caring for each other and of responsibility to their society continue as a vital priority. It is evident that today's Jewish citizens of Michigan are facing the crucial challenge of American pluralism—of acculturating, of becoming part of the integrated society, and yet maintaining their identity and their heritage for themselves as well as for future generations.

The end of the century saw Kathleen Straus elected to the Michigan State Board of Education; the election of Senator Carl Levin to the United States Senate and his brother Sander to the House of Representatives; the appointment of Ambassador David Hermelin as the American representative to Norway; and Max Fisher's service as a confidante of American presidents from Nixon to Clinton to George W. Bush.

A champion of public education, Straus led the party ticket after campaigning in every county in the state for her seat, to which she was elected twice. Previously president of the Jewish Community Council and the Detroit League of Women Voters, she also served the state board as president.

Senator Levin, whose brother Sander served as a Congressman in the House of Representative since 1982, was first elected in 1978 and has been returned to Washington for four terms. Endorsements in Michigan

The late Ambassador David Hermelin served as the United States Ambassador to Norway from 1997 to 2000. Photo by Doreen Hermelin.

papers ranging from the *Kalamazoo Gazette* to the *Detroit Free Press* salute him as thoughtful and principled.

With pride in his Jewish heritage and tradition, the late Ambassador and Mrs. Doreen Hermelin established a kosher kitchen in Oslo, Norway, in order to follow the traditional dietary restrictions, the first for an American embassy worldwide. Immensely popular with the people of Norway, he and Mrs. Hermelin hosted world leaders at the embassy, including President William Clinton, President Yassar Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Honored by the Republican party as a "world citizen," and acknowledged as "the dean of American Jewry, Max Fisher has maintained influential leadership positions from Detroit to Lansing, and from Jerusalem to Washington. The patriarch of the Jewish community, in his ninth decade Fisher reflected: "I want to bring people together to solve problems. The reward that I get is seeing things happen, seeing things change for the better. As we close out this century, I am hopeful

for the future. I know that together we will create a new and golden era for our people and our community."

In conclusion

Looking back over 240 years, Michigan held out the promise of opportunity for a better future to the lone Jewish fur trader of the British empire and to the great numbers of Jewish immigrants to America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Michigan beckoned, with the words from its seal: "If you seek a beautiful peninsula, look about you." In turn, the record of Jewish life in this state reflects dedication to the principles of democracy, hard work and emphasis on family, education, and good citizenship. Indeed, the story of Jewish life in Michigan has become an important part of the overall tapestry of the extraordinary American experience.

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